

Leadership – The Secret
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Leadership – The Secret

My friend Bob Weber, a fellow elder at our church Mount Paran North Church of God, who is also a world known leadership teacher for large ministries and corporations, coached me with the outline of this teaching. He gave me the basics that he teaches. However, I want to make it clear that not everything in this series is necessarily his opinion, as I took his outline and changed and added to it according to how I felt the Holy Spirit lead me.

I have also been greatly inspired by Dr. Kirk Walters, Administrative Pastor for Mount Paran North Church of God in Marietta, Georgia, USA. Dr. Walters is one of my most respected leader figures. He made a valuable contribution to this booklet.

There is a difference between management and leadership. Not all leaders are managers, nor are all managers leaders. Managers manage a business or ministry, they take care of making sure that all employees do their jobs and that goals are accomplished.

I personally am not a manager, but God has put me in the position of a leader. This is evidenced by how the International School of The Bible (ISOB) is operated. ISOB is a “grass roots” managed ministry. The people in the field who utilize our books determine how the ministry should operate. Often they actually teach me, their so-called leader.

Good leaders do not dominate their followers. I believe that a good leader just follows the Lord, walks with Him, and then from time to time looks back to see who is walking with him. Followers follow a good leader voluntarily.

The Secret

You may be surprised by what I call the secret to leadership. It is so simple that you may find it hard to believe.

If you are a believer in Jesus Christ, then the greatest leader of all history, Jesus Christ, lives inside of you through the Holy Spirit. He yearns to live His life through you. That is called grace. If He lives in you, then all the potential of the greatest leader the world has ever known may be manifested through your individual personality.

Galatians 2:20 says,

20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me."

There are just two things limiting this powerful leadership being manifested in and through you.

1. Your lack of faith and belief of the fact that He lives in you and wants to live His life through you.
2. Your lack of cooperation to allow Him to rid your life of all that is not of Him, called "the flesh."

Taken from chapter "SIT" in the Grow or Die book.

Following are some facts in the Word that you should meditate on. These facts are good seed, which will bear good fruit in your life.

The Holy Spirit through the Word can make who you are in Christ a reality. You need to take the Word at face value and believe it as a legal document.

You were hopelessly lost.

You were dead in your sins.

The blood Jesus shed on the Cross removed your sins. He took your place.

You were already "In Christ" when the following events took place.

You died with Christ.

You were buried with Christ.

You were made alive with Christ.

That is our legal standing with God today and the foundation of our legal rights. As far as the spiritual world is concerned, your position is with Christ in the heavenlies. You are in a seat of authority. Satan and your mind will tell you that you are not seated with Christ in the heavenlies, but that is a lie! You need to know that God seated you with Him while you were yet a sinner!

You are a new creation. “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

You are righteous.

Satan’s dominion over you is broken.

God has created each of us with special gifts, and not every one of us is called to be what the world calls a leader. However, I do believe that God desires to work His life through each of us as a leader in some fashion or another. For those of you who have been put in some sort of leadership position whether in ministry, business, or as the head of a family, you have the potential to affect your realm of influence with the most powerful leadership skills known to man! Do you believe this?

Yes _____

No _____

Not sure, tell me more _____

Following are 14 major attributes that in my opinion leaders must develop. I do not claim that this is an exhaustive list, but these are the issues that are the most important to me.

1. A godly leader is really a servant, or otherwise described in the Bible as a slave.

2 Corinthians 4:5-7 (Amplified Bible) says,

“For what we preach is not ourselves but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves [merely] as your servants (slaves) for Jesus’ sake.

For God Who said, Let light shine out of darkness, has shone in our hearts so as [to beam forth] the Light for the illumination of the knowledge of the majesty and glory of God [as it is manifest in the Person and is revealed] in the face of Jesus Christ (the Messiah).

However, we possess this precious treasure [the divine Light of the Gospel] in [frail, human] vessels of earth, that the grandeur and exceeding greatness of the power may be shown to be from God and not from ourselves.”

My good friend Scott Rickles said something to me that really applies to this idea. He said, “We must obey to go sacrifice for others. Leave the best to give your best to those who can do nothing in return for you.”

The above Scripture says that God has shone the light into our hearts. Jesus did that by leaving His best to give us His best, and He knew that there was no way we could repay Him for that. However, it does infer that now as we have this light we are obliged to “beam forth” that light to others, as their servants, or their slaves. A slave works without any expectation of return. He/she simply does what the master says. That is how we are to be to others.

A leader first must be a servant.

Matthew 20:20-28 says,

20 “Then the mother of Zebedee’s sons came to Him with her sons, kneeling down and asking something from Him.”

21 And He said to her, “What do you wish?” She said to Him, “Grant that these two sons of mine may sit, one on Your right hand and the other on the left, in Your kingdom.”

22 But Jesus answered and said, “You do not know what you ask. Are you able to drink the cup that I am about to drink, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?” They said to Him, “We are able.”

23 So He said to them, “You will indeed drink My cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with; but to sit on My right hand and on My left is not Mine to give, but it is for those for whom it is prepared by My Father.”

24 And when the ten heard it, they were greatly displeased with the two brothers.

25 But Jesus called them to Himself and said, “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.

26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave –

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.””

We Serve God by Serving Others. By Rick Warren

“Whoever wants to be great must become a servant.” Mark 10:43 (MSG)

The world defines greatness in terms of power, possessions, prestige, and position. If you can demand service from others, you’ve arrived. In our self-serving culture with “it’s me-first” mentality, acting like a servant is not a popular concept.

Jesus, however, measured greatness in terms of service, not status. God determines your greatness by how many people you serve, not how many people serve you.

This is so contrary to the world’s idea of greatness that we have a hard time understanding it, much less practicing it. The disciples argued about who deserved the most prominent position, and 2,000 years later, Christian leaders still jockey for position and prominence in churches, denominations, and parachurch ministries.

Thousands of books have been written on leadership, but few on servanthood. Everyone wants to lead; no one wants to be a servant. We would rather be generals than privates. Even Christians want to be “servant-leaders,” not just plain servants. But to be like Jesus is to be a servant. That’s what he called himself.

While knowing your shape [your giftedness] is important for serving God, having the heart of a servant is even more important. Remember, God shaped you for service, not for self-centeredness. Without a servant’s heart, you will be tempted to misuse your shape for personal gain. You will also be tempted to use it as an excuse to exempt yourself from meeting some needs.

God often tests our hearts by asking us to serve in ways we’re not shaped. If you see a man fall into a ditch, God expects you to help him out, not say, “I don’t have the gift of mercy or service.”

While you may not be gifted a particular task, you may be called to do it if no one who is gifted at it is around. Your primary ministry should be in the area of your shape, but your secondary service is wherever you’re needed at the moment.

Your shape reveals your ministry, but your servant’s heart will reveal your maturity. No special talent or gift is required to stay after a meeting to pick up trash or stack chairs. Anyone can be a servant. All it requires is character.

It is possible to serve in church for a lifetime without ever being a servant. You must have a servant’s heart.

How can you know if you have the heart of a servant?

Jesus said, “You can tell what they are by what they do” (Matthew 7:16, CEV).

Matthew 24:45-46 says,

45 *“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his master made ruler over his household, to give them food in due season?”*

46 *Blessed is that servant whom his master, when he comes, will find so doing.”*

A leader must be a “zero.”

I like an idea expressed by Reinhart Bonnke that I recently heard. He told about the time when God first spoke to him as a youth that he would preach the Gospel to all of Africa. When he told this to his father who was a minister, his father told Reinhart, “No, you had heard God wrong.” In fact, he said that his older brother would be used by God and would inherit the family ministry. After all, his father told him, “Your brother is smarter and gets better grades in school.” Other things happened in Reinhart’s life that caused him to become a “zero,” 0, a number that had no value. As most of you know, Reinhart Bonnke has, in this time of history, become one of the greatest evangelists the world has known, especially in Africa.

Then, Bonnke described that Jesus is number one, 1. If a person who is a zero would put the one in front, then together they would become a ten, 10. Also, as more zeros are added, the number multiplies; 1,000,000.

Remember, Jesus prayed all night and then chose twelve “zeros” to be his apostles and disciples. Do you qualify as a zero? Then make sure that number One is in front of you!

Notes:

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2. A leader must have vision.

Even secular people know that without vision, there is no discipline, no possibility of having success. God is a God of vision. Notice even in the creation (or the recreation) of everything as told in Genesis chapter 1, God worked with vision.

Genesis 1:2 says,

“The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.”

The verses following Genesis 1:2 describe everything that God created. First, God saw the darkness, then God had the vision of light, then God spoke.

God calls those things that are not as though they already existed.

Romans 4:17 says,

17 “(as it is written, “I have made you a father of many nations”) in the presence of Him whom he believed – God, who gives life to the dead and calls those things which do not exist as though they did.”

A study was done at Yale University between the years 1952 to 1972. Graduates were asked to share their vision for their lives and vocations. Only 3% of the graduates had a firm dream or vision and recorded it on paper. Twenty years later, it was discovered that those 3% possessed more wealth than all the other 97% combined!

Proverbs 29:18 (NKJV) says,

18 “Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.”

Proverbs 29:18 (KJV) says,

18 “Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.”

God created man in His own image. We were created to live by vision, a vision for the future. Without vision, a person

will have an undisciplined life. He/she will wander into many vocations, ventures, ministries, but there will be no “captain on the ship” setting the course.

I have heard it said, “Unhappiness is not knowing what you want and working your guts out to get it.” “What we commit ourselves to become has more impact than all of our yesterdays.”

What is the power of vision?

Even in the secular corporate world, leaders know for sure that they need vision. Good corporate leaders know that they must create vision in their employees and followers. Even cult leaders know this power, and use it. There is a power in human beings, even unregenerated ones that can accomplish great feats through the power of vision and dreams. However, that is not God given nor God ordained. People utilize the powerful principle of vision for their own selfish desires. The power of God is missing in their vision.

God gives His children vision through His Word.

1 Samuel 3:1 (Amplified Bible) says,

“NOW THE boy Samuel ministered to the Lord before Eli. The word of the Lord was rare and precious in those days; there was no frequent or widely spread vision.”

Secular people do not have the privilege of the full power of vision offered by God. The difference between God giving a vision and man deciding on his own vision is that His Word is a living seed that will accomplish the vision in partnership with our cooperative human effort. It is not our human effort that accomplishes the vision, but His Word. On the other hand, we being partners with God need to hear and obey what He says about our part in the process. God has given me vision to write through Psalm 68:11 (KJV) which says, “The Lord gave the word: great was the company of those that published it.”

I am called to listen to His voice, to work hard at writing, to use discipline to be quiet and get at my computer and write. I am called to proof read, to have others proof read, and work hard. However, it is not I who spreads what I write to dozens of nations. It is not I who has the power to heal people’s

wounds and bring them to Jesus. It is not I who makes disciples. His Word does all of that. His Word is a seed. His Word is supernatural.

To whom does He give vision?

Men and women with “good hearts.”

Luke 8:15 says,

15 “But the ones that fell on the good ground are those who, having heard the word with a noble and good heart, keep it and bear fruit with patience.”

“One hour people” are able to hear God better and therefore receive His vision.

Matthew 20:6-8 says,

6 “And about the eleventh hour he went out and found others standing idle, and said to them, ‘Why have you been standing here idle all day?’

7 They said to him, ‘Because no one hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and whatever is right you will receive.’

8 So when evening had come, the owner of the vineyard said to his steward, ‘Call the laborers and give them their wages, beginning with the last to the first.’”

You may be called to plug into another person’s vision.

Be careful to be sensitive to this and do not despise it. Normally if God calls you to partner in another person’s vision, you will eventually discover that your God given vision will intersect with the other person’s vision and the Body of Christ will be enriched.

Notes:

3. Express your vision to others.

Speaking the Word is powerful. David spoke to Goliath. Profession seals commitment to vision. Spoken words are a spiritual force.

Romans 10:9-10 says,

9 “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

With this being said, make sure that you pick and choose to whom you express your vision. Some people would only attempt to discourage you and give you doubt. Others will encourage you and strengthen your faith.

Notes:

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4. Examine everything. Honesty is required.

Discernment.

Be cautious to examine all things with the Holy Spirit. Ask Him to discern the truth about a matter and especially

about people. Some people can fool even the best of us. Only the Holy Spirit can show you the truth.

Proverbs 2:3-8 says,

3 “Yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding,

4 If you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures;

5 Then you will understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.

6 For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding;

7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk uprightly;

8 He guards the paths of justice, and preserves the way of His saints.”

Your own personal honesty.

God can only work with total “gut level” honesty! Any untruth or lie is an invitation for Satan to work. It is a hook that he may get a hold of and manipulate your life. Someone said, "No one is so blind as someone who does not want to see the truth."

Psalm 51:6 says,

6 “Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom.”

Psalm 85:10-11 says,

10 “Mercy and truth have met together; Righteousness and peace have kissed.

11 Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven.”

1 John 1:7 says,

7 “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”

Keeping your word.

The reason we can trust God and His Word is that He never lies. Indeed He cannot lie. Too many believers do not understand God's heart when it comes to "swearing to his own hurt."

Following is a quote from Dr. Kirk Walters, Administrative Pastor for Mount Paran North Church of God in Marietta, Georgia, USA. Dr. Walters is one of my pastors and my friend.

One of the core issues concerning honesty in a leader is whether we lead by motivation or by manipulation. Manipulation is defined by Webster's Dictionary as "influencing or managing shrewdly or deviously or for personal gain." Motivation is to "provide someone with an incentive or motive to do something."

As a Christian leader, my honesty has to start with the core reason why I do something. Do I want to lead so that others may see me as a good leader?

Do I want to grow a church so that others can say I am a great pastor? Do I secretly want others to think I am successful? If my answer is yes (being completely honest with myself), I am susceptible to manipulate others in order to achieve my ultimate goal to be seen as successful.

Jesus said that there would be people who would come to him during the last days and say, "Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?" Then I will tell them plainly, "I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!" (Matthew 7:22-23) Jesus is saying that we can't just use his name, authority, and power to accomplish our will.

He says that "only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21) will be permitted into His kingdom.

But if our intention is to lead people into the perfect will of God the Father by pouring into their lives through the preached Word, discipleship and

servant leadership; our motives are pure and God will surely bless our efforts. There really are three reasons people will follow others:

1. Vision - a vision captures a person's mind with a mental picture of how the future could be.

2. Love - love captures a person's heart with a picture of how people can be.

3. Character - character makes up the difference. People will follow a person of character even if they don't completely understand the vision.

When we motivate with a holy vision, a godly love, and Christ's character; people will naturally be attracted and compelled to follow us. People are constantly looking for someone to follow. Leadership starts with a gut level honesty concerning our motives. When a leader constantly examines their own motives, others are less likely to question the leader's character and credibility.

A devotion by Watchman Nee.

“He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.” Psalm 15:4.

Whatever the nature of the contract, when the word of a Christian has been given, the promise must be honored. Because God keeps his word we have salvation; he is true to his pledge. The Gibeonites craftily deceived Joshua, and he made peace with them before discovering their plot (Joshua 9:19). Nevertheless, God insisted that the terms of the Covenant be honored, and later withheld rain because King Saul went back on that undertaking.

God will not permit us carelessly to destroy a covenant. He who insisted that Joshua should spare the Gibeonites, and later that King David should avenge the wrong done to them, expects us to be true to our word, even if it be to our own disadvantage.

Notes:

5. Exchange things in your life that are not needed.

Be disciplined to focus on the important and eliminate the non-essentials. Be careful not to respond to every need that comes to your attention. Jesus did not respond to every human need that He encountered. Often He would spend all night in prayer with the Father who would lead and guide His activities. Jesus found out during His prayer time what the Father would have Him do.

John 5:19 says,

19 “Then Jesus answered and said to them, ‘Most assuredly, I say to you, the Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He sees the Father do; for whatever He does, the Son also does in like manner.’”

John 12:20-26 says,

20 “Now there were certain Greeks among those who came up to worship at the feast.

21 Then they came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida of Galilee, and asked him, saying, “Sir, we wish to see Jesus.”

22 Philip came and told Andrew, and in turn Andrew and Philip told Jesus.

23 But Jesus answered them, saying, “The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified.

24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.

25 “He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

26 “If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.”

Notes:

6. Expose yourself to winners. Exclude negative thinkers.

Stay close to Jesus. Pick your friends. Pick one person who you would like to emulate. List what you like. Are those skills or attitudes? You are in control of your attitudes. Pick a person who you admire and would like to be like. List their qualities. Then examine if each quality is a skill or an attitude. You are in 100% control of your attitudes. Of course, our greatest example to emulate is Jesus. Continually get to know Him better and He will do the emulating inside of you by His grace!

Notes:

7. Exercise effort.

Start with one talent as in Matthew 25. Too many people want to start with five or ten talents. God will graduate you as you use what is in your hand like Moses did.

Do all as unto the Lord with all your might, all your hand finds to do. There is never a traffic jam on the extra mile.

Proverbs 21:5 says,

*5 "The plans of the diligent lead surely to plenty,
but those of everyone who is hasty, surely to
poverty."*

Put a lot of effort into relationships not just into the task at hand. There is a revenue of love.

Some people say, “I cannot make it big until I have my own business or ministry.” The unsaid portion of that statement is, “And in the meantime, I will not work hard in this job or this ministry until I get my own.” God will not bless that attitude.

Entering into God’s Sabbath.

While we are called to work diligently with the things at hand, we are also called to enter into His rest, Hebrews chapters 3 and 4. This sounds like a paradox, but really is not. God wants to convert us from “crop farmers” to fruit bearers. A crop farmer works the fields for corn (maize), wheat and barley. He must replant each year and then allow the land to rest (or rotate) every seven years. A fruit bearer tends the fruit, yet watches the supernatural reseeded that multiplies each year, thus producing grapes or apples, for example, beyond his/her greatest imagination. Jesus said:

John 12:24 says,

24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.”

Mark 4:8 says,

8 “But other seed fell on good ground and yielded a crop that sprang up, increased and produced: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

Quote from Watchman Nee.

The fulfillment of the meaning of the Sabbath comes by entering into God’s rest. However, to enter into God’s rest, we must accept His work. Here, then, is the guiding principle for our entire spiritual lives: we must enter into His rest before we can be a part of His work.

Only after entering into rest are we qualified in God’s eyes to rise up and serve. And only those who listen to and heed God’s Word enter into rest, not into work.”

Notes:

8. Exceed normal expectations. Allow God to work beyond your abilities. Explore all possible avenues, options.

At first, you will be tempted to only expect God to do what you are capable of doing. That is because God is not hasty. He may be delaying things until your character is lined up with His, and until His appointed season is here. But when it comes, watch out! Like I mentioned above, fruit from God is supernatural. It grows exponentially.

Allow God to have you think outside the box and allow God's "outside the box" thinking to speak to you. Dare to be different when led by God. God usually does His acts contrary to human understanding. If you want you must give, etc.

Allow God to explore new and different ways. So often, actually, most of the time, God's plan for something is very much unlike mine. Allow God to do something that is totally unlike anything you have ever experienced before. Be sensitive to circumstances, to other people's ideas, and mainly to that still small voice within you.

Ephesians 3:20 says,

20 "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us."

John 6:9-13 says,

9 "There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?"

10 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."

13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten."

Notes:

9. A leader must be under authority, or he will have no God given authority.

Jesus often delegates people to represent Him with His authority. This can be our business leaders, employers, pastors, and even government authorities. We are to obey the laws of the land and our delegated authorities as long as these laws do not violate the Word of the Lord. Peter said it well. "But Peter and the other apostles answered and said: 'We ought to obey God rather than men'" (Acts 5:29).

There is a principle of authority in Matthew 20.

There is a false concept that to be in submission means to be inferior.

What is authority? It is so misunderstood. The world says that authority is controlling someone. Jesus says that authority is becoming obligated to take care of someone.

Matthew 20:25-28 says,

25 "But Jesus called them to Himself and said, 'You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over

them, and those who are great exercise authority over them.

26 Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you, let him be your servant.

27 And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave –

28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.’”

The Law of Authority. Like the laws of gravity or lift are natural laws, or like the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus is a spiritual law, there is a spiritual law that has to do with authority. Briefly it goes like this: The one who submits to an authority figure will receive his blessings and curses. That includes care, support, or lack of it, depending upon the personality of the one submitted to. The flip side of this is that the authority figure cannot care for a person if that person is not submitted to him. If one tries to care for another without that other person being submitted, the authority figure will ultimately be destroyed. I have personal experience with both sides and I can testify that this law works!

In Matthew 8, the Centurion was under authority.

Why did Jesus get so excited with the centurion in Matthew chapter 8 when the centurion said, “Just say the word, and my servant will be healed. I am a man under authority and I have authority over others” (Matthew 8:8-9). The Word says that Jesus marveled and said to His disciples that He had never seen such great faith, not even in the covenant people of Israel. The centurion’s servant was healed in the same hour. What do faith and authority have in common, are they connected? Faith cannot exist without authority. Faith without works is dead.

These people were blessed by obeying authority.

2 Kings 5:1 – The Syrian General’s healing. The Syrian General tried to use his authority over Elisha to get his needs met (2 Kings 4). He wanted to be the boss and call the shots. But when he submitted to authority he got healed from a fatal disease, leprosy.

In 1 Kings 17:9, the widow submitted to Elijah, and instead of starving they were both fed supernaturally for a year. Later, when her son died, he was raised back to life. She got blessings for obedience.

I have personally been blessed beyond measure in the business world by “graduating God’s school of authority” after eight long years. I had not been raised as a child with clear authority ideas. Therefore, after I met Jesus, He saw fit to enroll me in His own “authority school.” I can tell you that prompt and dedicated obedience to delegated authority will bring blessings that no human can reproduce!

When we obey God, we receive authority.

In the parable of the pounds in Matthew 19, the master came back to see if they had been obedient. He gave them, the servants, more authority.

Notes:

10. A leader must operate in the Kingdom of God financial realm.

Matthew 6:33 says,

33 “But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.”

Tithing.

As I studied in depth what the Scriptures say about tithing, giving the first tenth of your increase to God, I noticed a very simple conclusion. That is that currency of the world is under a curse because it belongs to the Prince of this World, Satan.

However, if you tithe, you are cleansing the 90% that is left. The 90% becomes blessed and your financial life is no longer under the lordship of Satan.

Malachi 3:10 says,

10 “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and try Me now in this,” says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven and pour out for you such blessing that there will not be room enough to receive it.”

My opinion about the windows of heaven is that we should not expect money to drop out of the windows of heaven, but rather God’s personal Word to us, His rhema, His seed. When His seed hits our heart, then the blessings will come!

Proverbs 3:9-10 says,

*9 “Honor the LORD with your possessions, and with the firstfruits [tithe] of all your increase;
10 So your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will overflow with new wine.”*

Giving.

Luke 6:38 says,

38 “Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you.”

The law of giving does not only apply to money, it applies to everything that is within your power to give.

Moths and Rust.

Matthew 6:19-21 says,

19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal;

20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.

21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

Bigger Barns, covetousness.

Luke 12:15-34 says,

15 And He said to them, “Take heed and beware of covetousness, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses.”

16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully.

17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’

18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.

19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.”

20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’

Choose how you want to see your financial life.

Bags, barrels, baskets, or barns.

Bags with holes.

Haggai 1:6 says,

6 “You have sown much, and bring in little; You eat, but do not have enough; You drink, but you are not filled with drink; You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages, earns wages to put into a bag with holes.”

Barrels to feed your family.

2 Kings 4:1-7 says,

1 “A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your

servant feared the LORD. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves.”

2 So Elisha said to her, “What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?” And she said, “Your maidservant has nothing in the house but a jar of oil.”

3 Then he said, “Go, borrow vessels [barrels] from everywhere, from all your neighbors – empty vessels; do not gather just a few.

4 And when you have come in, you shall shut the door behind you and your sons; then pour it into all those vessels, and set aside the full ones.”

5 So she went from him and shut the door behind her and her sons, who brought the vessels to her; and she poured it out.

6 Now it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said to her son, “Bring me another vessel.” And he said to her, “There is not another vessel.” So the oil ceased.

7 Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, “Go, sell the oil and pay your debt; and you and your sons live on the rest.””

Baskets to feed the community.

John 6:5-13 says,

5 “Then Jesus lifted up His eyes, and seeing a great multitude coming toward Him, He said to Philip, “Where shall we buy bread, that these may eat?”

6 But this He said to test him, for He Himself knew what He would do.

7 Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, that every one of them may have a little.”

8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to Him,

9 “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two small fish, but what are they among so many?”

10 Then Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.

11 And Jesus took the loaves, and when He had given thanks He distributed them to the disciples, and the disciples to those sitting down; and likewise of the fish, as much as they wanted.

12 So when they were filled, He said to His disciples, "Gather up the fragments that remain, so that nothing is lost."

13 Therefore they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with the fragments of the five barley loaves which were left over by those who had eaten."

Barns to feed the nations.

Genesis 41:46-49 says,

46 "Joseph was thirty years old when he stood before Pharaoh king of Egypt. And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt.

47 Now in the seven plentiful years the ground brought forth abundantly.

48 So he gathered up all the food of the seven years which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities; he laid up in every city the food of the fields which surrounded them.

49 Joseph gathered very much grain, as the sand of the sea, until he stopped counting, for it was immeasurable.

Meditate upon this Scripture Paul wanted the Philippians to be blessed.

Philippians 4:15-19 (Amplified Bible) says,

15 "And you Philippians yourselves well know that in the early days of the Gospel ministry, when I left Macedonia, no church (assembly) entered into partnership with me and opened up [a debit and

credit] account in giving and receiving except you only.

16 For even in Thessalonica you sent [me contributions] for my needs, not only once but a second time.

17 Not that I seek or am eager for [your] gift, but I do seek and am eager for the fruit which increases to your credit [the harvest of blessing that is accumulating to your account].

18 But I have [your full payment] and more; I have everything I need and am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent me. [They are the] fragrant odor of an offering and sacrifice which God welcomes and in which He delights.

19 And my God will liberally supply (fill to the full) your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

John Wesley said, “The real value of a thing is the price it will bring in eternity.”

Notes:

11. A leader must maintain strong relationship skills with God.

Any Christian, especially a leader, must continually hear God speak. That is not possible unless one exercises strong relationship skills with God.

Relationship Skills:

a. Make a firm decision to pursue the relationship.

Offer yourself completely to God. Meditate on Romans 12:1-2.

This is our blood covenant response to a mighty blood covenant offered to us by God.

b. Take time to listen. You must take in His Word. Words are blood covenant containers. The Word of God is Jesus Himself; it is not a book of promises to pick and choose from. The Word of God should be pursued as a regular and daily relationship skill and should be looked at as listening to your Lord, Jesus Himself. Ask Him to speak. The Word is supernatural and it produces faith in the same way natural food produces energy. Jesus said that He is the true manna that gives eternal life. Write down what you feel He is speaking.

c. Take time to speak: Your words. Two-way journaling and being gut level honest is an important way to increase your relationship with God. Write down exactly how you feel. Honesty with your blood covenant partner, Jesus, will cause your sin to go on Him. You cannot and will not overcome any issue in life without this gut level honesty. We suggest two-way journaling. This is a great way to allow the “flow” of the Holy Spirit to speak to you personal and intimate things. First, get in a quiet place, set your mind on Jesus, and begin to worship Him. Write down what you want to tell or ask Jesus. Then, write down what you hear in your spirit. At first, there may be some mistakes, but through faith and practice, He will be real to you.

Ways to discern whose voice you are hearing:

- God’s voice: Affirms, corrects, and gives direction (truth).
- Satan’s voice: Keeps us bound in failure with lies and condemnation.
- Self’s voice, or our flesh: justifies, rationalizes, denies and projects or blames others.

Testing to see if we are hearing God’s voice:

- Is it scriptural?
- Does it glorify Jesus?
- Is there a witness in my spirit?
- Does it edify or tear down?
- Does it produce freedom or bondage?

Ways God speaks to us:

- The Bible. Revelation knowledge through the Holy Spirit.
- The Body of Christ: Fellow believers, pastors, and counselors. Be careful to not depend solely on this.
- Quiet time: Holy Spirit's voice. (Psalm 139:23-24, 1 John 1:9).
- Circumstances and situations in everyday life (Jeremiah 32:8).
- Accountability Partner: Often it is wise to have a trusted friend who will be bold enough to hold you accountable for issues in your life.

d. Take time to speak: His Words. The antagonist, Satan, and his assigned demons constantly are on task to come against your effort to relate to Jesus and to overcome. Only you can resist them. Jesus gave you the authority and responsibility to speak His Word against them. God told Joshua in Joshua 1:8: "This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate in it day and night, that you may observe to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success."

One idea for doing this is:

Read Psalms and Proverbs by the day. You should read aloud five Psalms every morning. Use the system of the calendar, i.e., on the 3rd of the month read Psalms 3, 33, 63, 93 and 123. Also read Proverb 3. In this system the student will read all Psalms and Proverbs every month. Using this system renews the mind, speaks the Word to Satan, and allows the suffering student to relate his/her emotions to the Psalmist's. Provisions can be made for months with 31 days, and for Psalm 119.

Also be sensitive to the Holy Spirit Who will give you a Word of warfare for a particular situation.

e. Meditation. Meditation on the Word is very important and extremely valuable. I quoted Joshua 1:8 above which tells us to meditate day and night. Psalm 1:2-3 says, "But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of

water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.”

Meditation on the Word displaces and replaces your carnal thinking which is a major feat. It also allows the Word to get deep down into your heart. The word *meditate* is related to a cow chewing her cud. She chews it, swallows it, regurgitates it, and then starts the process over again, and again, and again. This will allow the Word to go deeply into your heart, and will give the Holy Spirit an opportunity to speak something personal to you from the Word.

f. Fasting. Fasting is an important discipline. There are many types of fasts, and I will not cover that subject here. The main advantage of fasting is that it denies the strongest desire of the flesh, to eat. In doing so one is able to hear the Holy Spirit better. Remember, the flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh (Galatians 5:17). I have read that when a person is hungry, even his/her natural hearing is better.

g. Obey God. Ask God to give you something simple, something small every day that you may obey. It may be just encouraging another, it may be not driving down the same street that fed your addiction; it may be confessing your sin to Him. It may be taking a thought captive, or forgiving someone, or perhaps, giving a financial gift.

This is a big thing! John 14:21-23 says that when we obey His Word that He will reveal more and more of Himself to us. Once you have “seen” Jesus, relationship with Him will no longer be a discipline, but it will be a passionate pursuit.

Notes:

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12. A leader must live a sanctified life.

Earlier in this booklet I discussed that a leader must know who Christ has made him to be; he must know the truth of his identity as defined by God. Only if we know who we are in Christ can we then live and walk a sanctified life, a life of holiness unto the Lord. God has called us to be holy even as He is holy. Some might think that is strange because we know that we are not perfect while here in this fleshly body. However, if we know that Christ lives His life in us and through us, then we know that He can live His holiness in and through us. Obviously we will make mistakes and sin, however we can “walk in the Spirit” and repent our way through life.

Look at yourself in the mirror of the Word.

James 1:23-25 says,

23 “For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror;

24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was.

25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.”

God wants you to “walk in the Spirit” without condemnation.

Romans 8:1-9 says,

1 “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death.

3 For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh,

4 that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.

5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

6 For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

7 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

8 So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.”

Simply ask God to continually convict you, then confess your sin and repent. An important point to remember is that God will deliver you from your “enemies” that cause you to sin, but not your “friends.”

Notes:

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13. A leader must practice clear and concise communication.

Communication with other people is something that all of us need to really try to work on. We are all imperfect communicators. Others often misunderstand what is in our heart, and often our words mean something else to them other than what is intended. One of the most important and forgotten skills is listening. In the art of listening, one should strive to “put themselves into the other person’s shoes.” Feel how they might be feeling. That way when you do speak, your fewer words will hit the mark and mean more. Strive to have two-way conversations instead of just talking “at” people with no feedback.

Conflict resolution.

We will all be faced with conflict with other people at some point. Resolving that conflict, in most cases, is the desirable solution. There are times when that conflict cannot be resolved and we just must avoid and forgive that person. However, there are many times when we should strive to resolve the conflict. We should not bury issues that need to be confronted, and at the same time, strive to make the confrontation as one tempered with love and understanding.

I have seen conflict in ministry situations that was not resolved but left to fester like an infected sore for years. Well, guess who got involved? Satan took advantage of the conflict and diminished the ministry. Both conflicting parties, the offending one and the one offended, chose to just bury and ignore the conflict. However, when things are put in darkness Satan gets involved, but when things are brought into the light, Jesus gets involved and brings healing. You must however be sure to temper your resolution with “speaking the truth in love.”

Beating around the bush and avoiding getting to the real issue.

Some people live in habits that avoid communicating the real issue that needs to be discussed. Rather than just come out and ask a question, or make a concise point, they prefer to just sort of drop a hint, or infer something. I am not sure why they do this, maybe, it is just a learned habit from their youth, or

perhaps, it comes from a deep inner wound. As an example, if you want to ask a person to come to your house, you should say, “I would love to have you come visit me. Can you come to my house on Friday?” But in order to avoid confrontation, others might try to say the same request like this: “I am so lonely. I really need someone to come visit me. But I just don’t know what do to. Do you have any ideas?”

When you communicate to those who have put themselves under your leadership, make sure that you are kind and compassionate with your attitude and speech. Be sensitive, merciful, and build them up. Make sure you make them feel like they matter. Build them up in the Lord. Be a good listener and respect their feelings and thoughts even if they are wrong. Gently bring them to the truth rather than just scold them for being wrong, but do not be afraid to confront them with the “truth in love.”

Finally, be careful on how you define leadership. Do not “make yourself” a leader over others. Rather be sensitive to those who see you as a leader and wish to follow you. If you are placed in an involuntary position of leadership over a person who does not wish to submit to your authority, you must handle that circumstance with much prayer and humility.

Notes:

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14. The final secret.

We started this booklet with the wonderful secret that Christ lives in you, and that He is the ultimate leader and we should allow Him to live His life through us. Now we wish to add another powerful secret to this.

As a leader and a follower of Jesus Christ, you will for sure encounter trials, afflictions and spiritual warfare. Satan will send dream snatchers, as in Mark 4. Satan comes to steal the seed that God spoke into your heart. Forgive them and move on. However, in addition to human dream snatchers there will be afflictions that will also attempt to snatch your dream and vision. Just remember that God is not the one who brings afflictions into your life (Job chapter 1).

A leader must know that fruit must be preceded by afflictions.

Hebrews 2:10 says,

10 “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”

If we are walking close to the Lord Jesus in intimate fellowship with Him, He will give us peace during our challenging times. Often, in my life, He will let me know personally that He is aware of what I am going through and is walking with me. That in itself is great comfort!

The secret.

Colossians 1:20 says,

20 “and by Him [the Father] to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

The word *reconcile* means to create a friend from an enemy, or to bring a friendly relationship between two disputing parties. We know that we, as humans, have been reconciled to Christ. However, this Scripture in Colossians 1:20 says that God makes a friend of all “things.” Our afflictions are things. How does He do that? Through the

blood of His cross! The miracle of the cross of Jesus and His shed blood is that He turned the most horrible act that Satan or any human could ever perpetrate on any human being into the greatest blessing that this world has ever known.

Sin, not necessarily your sin but sin in general in this earth, is the cause of pain and suffering. Because Jesus bore all sin, therefore when pain and suffering comes to you, it finds no sin with which to harm you. Of course, we are not perfect, but if we continually confess our sin He continually keeps us clean. Therefore, if you believe this, all that pain, suffering and affliction must, by law, become a blessing. It is not up to you to predict how the blessing will take place, it is only your task to believe and worship God for His wonderful miracle that took place in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Paul actually rejoiced in his sufferings.

Colossians 1:24 says,

24 "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church."

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 says,

9 "And He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

10 "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Notice that Paul did not say that he merely endured his suffering and afflictions, but that he actually rejoiced in them and took pleasure in them. Why could he say this?

Paul knew the secret.

Notice in Colossians 1:24 above, that Paul said that his afflictions were actually filling up those afflictions of Christ that were lacking. Paul also stated that his afflictions were

working for the benefit of the Body of Christ, the Church. How could this be?

I have learned some things about this issue not only by Holy Spirit speaking Scripture to me, but also by my personal experience.

Jesus paid the entire price for sin on the cross and by His resurrection He applied that to us. In that regard there was nothing lacking. I believe what was and is lacking is what is called *our soul death and resurrection*. Our afflictions in some secret way, when reconciled, bring others into the saving knowledge of Jesus and into His Kingdom.

Look at Old Testament Joseph as an example.

Joseph suffered greatly at the hands of his brothers and at the hands of the authorities in Egypt while he was a prisoner. However, somehow Joseph's testimony was, "But God was with me." When he was finally delivered from prison and made prime minister over Egypt, he was not only personally delivered and rewarded, but his afflictions caused God's people, all of Israel to be saved. That is an example of what our afflictions will do if endured in faith.

Now look at this entire passage in Colossians in this context.

Colossians 1:19-20, 24-27 says,

19 "For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell,

20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross."

24 "I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,

25 of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God which was given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God,

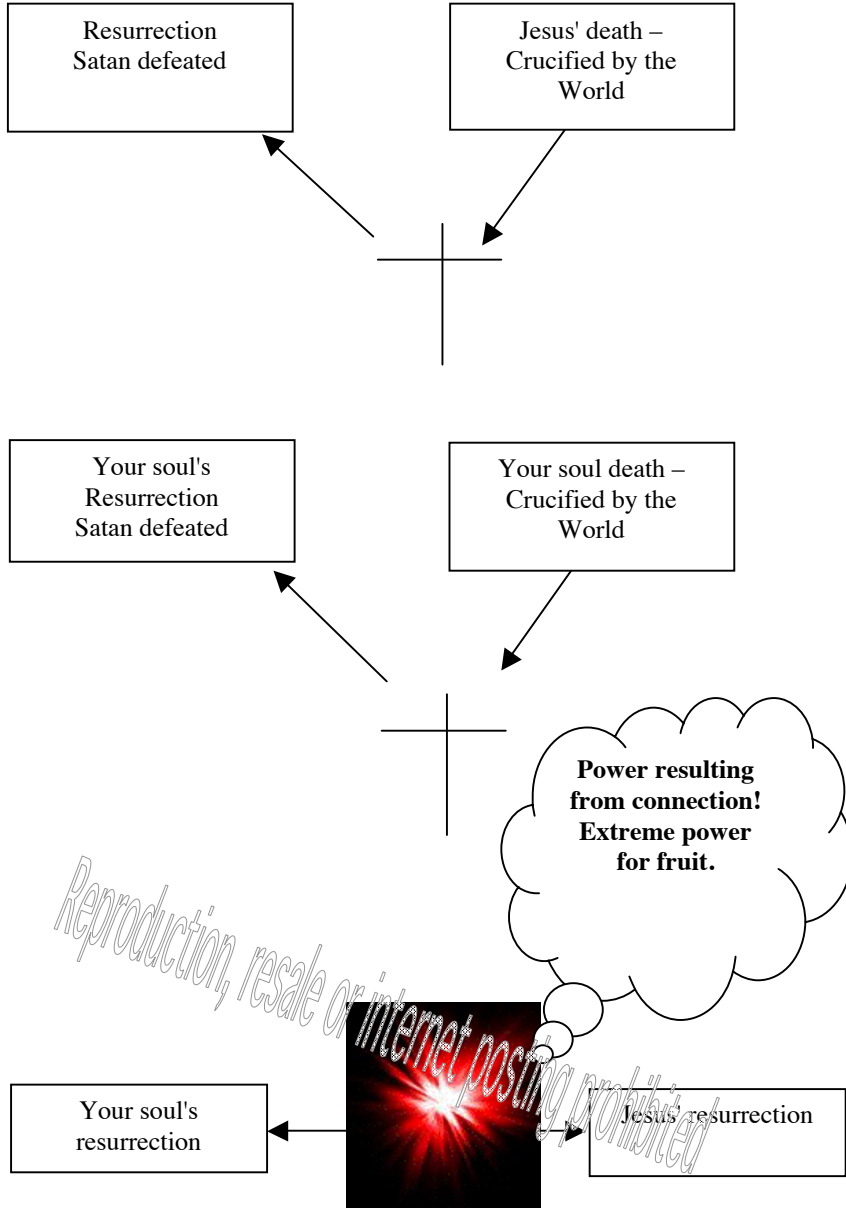
26 the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints.

27 To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.”

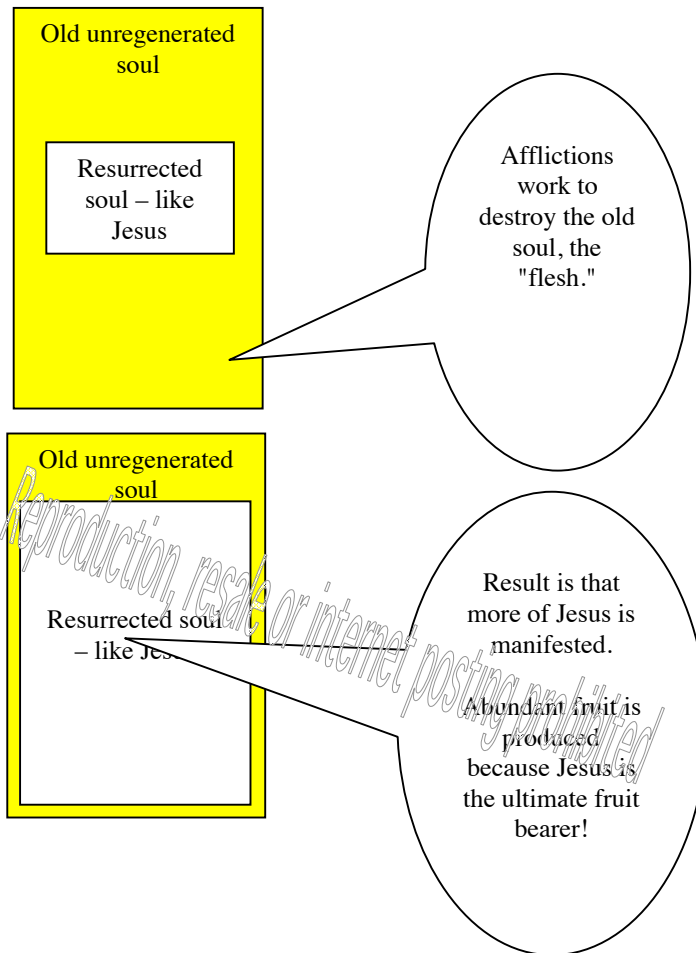
Notice the end result that Paul had in mind through his sufferings, in verse 27. He knew that his afflictions would reveal to many the mystery that Christ actually lives in them! I submit that often the only way that God can reveal that secret to many is through our afflictions. I have some very specific personal testimonies about this that have amazed me!

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Putting it all together. It has to do with the death and resurrection of our soul.



Your soul = will, mind, emotions



When we were saved we received the resurrected Spirit of Jesus. When we go to Heaven we will receive our resurrected bodies. In the meantime, our soul is here in its unperfected state. That includes our will, mind, and emotions. When we go through afflictions and suffering that is our “soul death.” That is when we are called to be “overcomers.” As we pass through the valley of the shadow of death trusting and worshipping God through it all, our soul realizes resurrection as we go through life.

When that happens the same power that defeated Satan through the resurrection of Jesus defeats the enemies in our realm of influence, and we bear much fruit as Jesus did through His resurrection! There are many proof Scriptures for this process, but I do not feel that this small booklet is the place in which to go into detail. Here are two.

John 12:24 (KJV) says,

24 “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn [kernel] of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.”

Overcoming involves our soul death.

Revelation 12:11 says,

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives [psuche or soul] to the death.”

This is the process that God took Abraham through.

A blood covenant requires two deaths, the blood of both parties. Jesus took up His cross and allowed His own crucifixion. That was His part.

Part one: God’s part.

God spoke His promise to Abraham first in Genesis chapter 12. That was a huge promise for someone who was

without child. In the natural, Abraham and Sarah could not bear children.

Genesis 12:2 says,

2 “I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.”

Then God spoke the vision to Abraham another time in Genesis chapter 15.

Genesis 15:5 says,

5 “Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’”

Abraham needed something more from God to help him believe such an incredible promise. So Abraham asked God to help him believe.

Genesis 15:8 says,

8 “And he said, ‘Lord GOD, how shall I know that I will inherit it?’”

God answered that question with a blood covenant ceremony. That ceremony foretold of the cross and shed blood of Jesus to come in the future.

Genesis 15:9-10 says,

9 “So He said to him, ‘Bring Me a three-year-old heifer, a three-year-old female goat, a three-year-old ram, a turtledove, and a young pigeon.’

10 Then he brought all these to Him and cut them in two, down the middle, and placed each piece opposite the other; but he did not cut the birds in two.”

Like the cross of Jesus wherein we had no part, God put Abram to sleep. Neither Abram nor we can have anything to do with the merciful shedding of blood on the part of God.

Genesis 15:12 says,

12 “Now when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.”

The two beings that walked through the blood covenant ditch, in my opinion, were two manifestations of God, the smoking oven and the burning torch. The smoking oven infers God’s wrath. All of God’s wrath was put on Jesus at the cross.

Genesis 15:17 says,

17 “And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.”

Part two: Our part. Our soul death.

As I discuss in my other books, especially “Grow or Die” in the chapter “The Flowing River”¹, we take up our cross when we deny our mind, will and emotions to exercise their ungodly attributes. But that is simply the “taking up.” After that, there must be the actual crucifixion of our soul.

When Jesus was crucified and raised from the dead, He completed His part of the blood covenant. He gave us the right to have the resurrected Holy Spirit join with our spirit. He gave us the privilege of obtaining a resurrected body when our earthly body dies. However, in the meantime here on earth our “old soul” still lives. That is something that He cannot control. That is within our sovereign will to say *yes* or *no* to.

That is what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, it is our willingness to take up our cross and put our soul before the Lord as a living sacrifice as it says in Romans 12:1-2. When we take up our cross, it is inferring that we are willing to allow our soul go through death and resurrection.

Abram’s soul death.

Genesis 22:1-2 says,

¹ The Flowing River: http://www.isob-bible.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=94%3Athe-flowing-river&catid=50&Itemid=74

1 “Now it came to pass after these things that God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’

2 Then He said, ‘Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.’”

Try to imagine this. You cannot have children, however God promises that you not only will have children but that they will be as numerous as the sand of the sea and the stars in the sky, and they will be greatly used for the salvation of mankind.

Then, supernaturally, you have a child. But wait. Then God tells you to go kill your child as a sacrifice to Him. Tell me: how would you feel? Would your soul die? Yet Abraham so solidly believed God that not only was he willing to obey, but also thought that even if he did kill his son, that God would surely raise him from the dead just to keep His promise.

Hebrews 11:17-19 says,

17 “By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son,

18 of whom it was said, ‘In Isaac your seed shall be called,’

19 concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense.”

As Abraham obeyed God, God raised up a substitute sacrifice, depicting Christ.

Genesis 22:12-13 says,

12 “And He said, ‘Do not lay your hand on the lad, or do anything to him; for now I know that you fear God, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, from Me.’

13 Then Abraham lifted his eyes and looked, and there behind him was a ram caught in a thicket by its horns. So Abraham went and took the ram, and offered it up for a burnt offering instead of his son.”

That was the “resurrection” of Abraham’s soul.

After the death and resurrection of our soul, we are united in blood covenant with the death and resurrection of Jesus in a new way. We are already united via the blood covenant at our new birth because that is when our first soul death took place. We rejected and died to our independence and made Jesus Lord.

However, as we go through deeper soul deaths we are united to God’s covenant power in a much stronger way, way beyond our human comprehension for the bearing of abundant fruit.

Look how God sent Abraham a personal message promising abundant fruit.

God had made promises before, but now that Abraham had turned his affliction into a friend, the fruit had been given the atmosphere on which to travel.

Genesis 22:15-18 says,

15 “Then the Angel of the LORD called to Abraham a second time out of heaven,

16 and said: ‘By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son –

17 blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.

18 In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice.’”

The promise of prosperity after your soul death.

3 John 1:2 says,

“2 Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”

Jesus’ Kingdom works like fruit.

Fruit, like grapes, have exponential growth. Each grape has two seeds in it, which produce two more grape vines, not just two more grapes. Just imagine if each vine had 1,000 grapes what the exponential increase could it be! The first reproduction cycle could have as many as 2,000,000 grapes.

Jesus' Kingdom works like yeast or leaven.

Yeast also has an amazing exponential increase. Yeast, or leaven, consists of living cells. Each cell splits into two cells, and they keep splitting and splitting until the yeast has grown in an amazing way!

Ungodly yeast or leaven.

In Mark chapter 8, Jesus was addressing the disciples in the boat about their fear of not having enough food, or you could say, provisions in life. They had only brought one loaf of bread for the trip and they became worried like so many of us.

Mark 8:13-21 says,

13 "And He left them, and getting into the boat again, departed to the other side.

14 Now the disciples had forgotten to take bread, and they did not have more than one loaf with them in the boat.

15 Then He charged them, saying, 'Take heed, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.'

16 And they reasoned among themselves, saying, 'It is because we have no bread.'

17 But Jesus, being aware of it, said to them, 'Why do you reason because you have no bread? Do you not yet perceive nor understand? Is your heart still hardened?'

18 Having eyes, do you not see? And having ears, do you not hear? And do you not remember?'

19 When I broke the five loaves for the five thousand, how many baskets full of fragments did you take up?' They said to Him, 'Twelve.'

20 'Also, when I broke the seven for the four thousand, how many large baskets full of fragments did you take up?' And they said, 'Seven.'

21 So He said to them, ‘How is it you do not understand?’”

Why did Jesus warn them about the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod?

The yeast of the Pharisees.

The yeast of the Pharisees is self-righteousness. They turned God’s Word upside down, focusing on external details but violating God’s important principles and commands. They supposed that their external obedience to the Law could cause God to take care of their temporal needs.

The yeast of Herod.

Herod represents “the World system.” Herod represents cheating, self-indulgence, grabbing power, hurting others to promote one’s self. It is like the corporate world today and even much like some people who just exist on trying to steal, to eat and others who live for the lust of pleasure.

Jesus was telling His disciples in effect, to seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and watch the Kingdom yeast provide an abundance for your life (Matthew 6:33).

Godly yeast or leaven.

Matthew 13:33 says,

33 “Another parable He spoke to them: ‘The kingdom of heaven is like leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till it was all leavened.’”

In effect what Jesus was saying all the way through Matthew chapter 13 was that if we would plug into His Kingdom that we would live a life of abundant fruit, not only for our own needs but also for His. What I am saying is that the only way to experience our full potential for supernatural fruit, way beyond our imagination, is to cooperate with God in the death and resurrection of our souls as I have been describing.

Amos 9:13 says,

13 “Behold, the days are coming,’ says the LORD, ‘When the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed; the mountains shall drip with sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it.’”

I did not learn this by merely studying the Word, although it is certainly in the Word. I learned, and still am learning this secret by experiencing my own soul death. When I saw amazing fruit appear, I became speechless, well almost! It is a “mind blowing” experience, of entering into the rest of God, yet watching fruit come into your life for which there is not explanation other than God’s working.

Could the little boy or even the disciples in John chapter 6 explain or boast in feeding 5,000 people with two fish and five loaves? Just imagine what that little boy told his mama when he got home! “Mama, you should have seen what that Man did!”

How are we to reckon this fruit? What kind of mindset can possibly predict the supernatural increase God can provide?

Jesus said that we could experience abundant life.

John 10:10 says,

10 “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”

The original Greek meaning of the word abundantly is:

4053 περισσος perissos {per-is-sos'}

more, beyond measure, vehemently, more abundantly, very highly, exceeding some number or measure or rank or need, over and above, more than is necessary, superadded, surpassing, uncommon, pre-eminence, superiority, advantage, more eminent, more remarkable, more excellent, superior, extraordinary, something further, more, much more than all.

You might wonder why I took up so much space in a small leadership booklet on afflictions leading to fruit bearing. Here is my answer. Show me a person who is bearing abundant fruit and I will show you a host of people following that person as their leader.

The odor that draws others to Christ.

From Watchman Nee - A Table In The Wilderness.

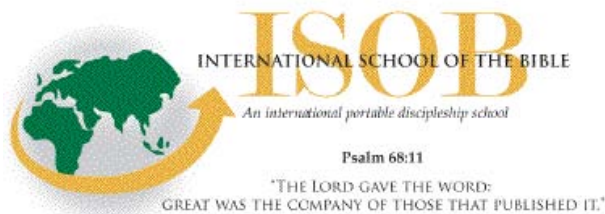
“The house was filled with the odor of the ointment.” John 12:3.

By the breaking of that flask for the Lord’s sake, the home in Bethany was pervaded with the sweetest fragrance. Something was set free for all to appreciate, and none could be unaware of it. What is the significance of this?

Have you ever met someone who has suffered deeply, and whose experiences have compelled him to find satisfaction in the Lord alone? Then immediately you have become aware of something. Immediately your spiritual senses detect a fragrance – what Paul terms “a sweet savor of Christ.” Something has been broken in that life in order to release what is there within of God himself, and you cannot mistake it. Yes, the odor that filled the house that day in Bethany still fills the Church today. Mary’s fragrance never passes.

Notes:

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